

ending
homelessness
is everyone's
responsibility



REGIONAL PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS



not accommodate medical appointment schedules, or may not be available near shelters. Further, individuals with HIV/AIDS may be sensitive to the sun or heat due to medications or other treatments, and therefore have extreme difficulty waiting for a bus at an uncovered stop. Of course, a significant barrier to transit for the homeless population is its cost.

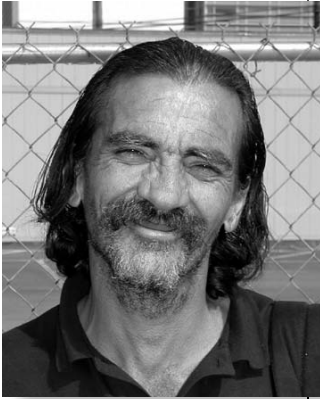
Several other issues may complicate a homeless person's needs when he or she is HIV+ or has AIDS. Transgender, gay, or lesbian individuals may be at a higher risk of violence on the streets or in shelter. Further, these individuals are often unable to seek work or maintain employment because of sick time and medical appointments. Persons with HIV/AIDS and a criminal background may be discriminated against when seeking housing, or may find housing subsidies unaffordable. To confront these multiple complexities, several strategies are offered below:

Community Strategies: HIV/AIDS

- *Incorporate an HIV/AIDS health testing and education component in shelters and clinics: 1) educate clients regarding services available, and 2) outreach to homeless persons infected with HIV/AIDS through the Human Services Campus Day Resource Center; coordinate with providers on the Human Services Campus to disseminate information, and explore the option of having staff from HIV/AIDS agencies on-site.*
- *Advocate for respite beds for persons released from the hospital who require health care, including those who are undocumented.*
- *Advocate housing people with immediate or past criminal records by: 1) identifying and developing relationships with housing managers and developers who will accept tenants with criminal histories, 2) identifying affordable housing vacancies, 3) increasing affordable permanent and transitional housing and supportive services for releases.*
- *Increase transitional housing programs with supportive services for homeless people with HIV/AIDS, including those for undocumented people.*
- *Advocate for an increase for inpatient substance abuse treatment.*

Veterans

In discussing possible solutions for homeless veterans, their propensity to band together, their chronic homelessness, and high incidence of addiction must be taken into consideration. Homeless veterans share similar experiences, and appear to want to stay together on the streets. Although this social structure may provide some positive benefits, it may be an obstacle to accessing housing



or services. Further, homeless veterans seem to share a frustration with a bureaucracy that they perceive as unable to assist them.

Many veterans have been homeless for 10 or more years, and therefore require intensive outreach and engagement in order to achieve solutions. However, homeless veterans do tend to remain in the same geographical area, and therefore may be easier to locate and approach. Further, the addiction issues experienced by homeless veterans require special attention. The specific recommendations for assisting homeless veterans are described below:

Community Strategies: Veterans

- *Advocate for implementation of a cross-functional team approach to outreaching to chronically homeless veterans. Coordinate outreach and services by targeting veterans who do not access services using a joint case-management approach. Because veterans are often chronically homeless, increase collaboration between VA and community-based agencies that are out in the field serving homeless veterans.*
- *Expand and empower the, Homeless Veterans Coalition (government, veterans services agencies, and service providers) to maximize coordination and effectiveness of veterans' services, develop reference materials (print) to distribute to homeless veterans and advocate for housing and services for homeless veterans.*
- *Advocate for an increase in veteran-specific residential substance abuse programs and transitional housing programs that support sobriety. Veterans have a high rate of success in veteran-specific programs.*
- *Utilize Veterans Administration to outreach to, support and educate providers regarding identifying veterans and services available to them, including the development of reference materials (print) to distribute to homeless veterans.*
- *Collaborate with ASU to develop a research tool and work with homeless providers to administer a survey to homeless veterans (both those accessing services and not accessing services) to identify needs, barriers, what works, what does not work, etc.*
- *Obtain support from legal and veterans' organizations to identify veterans in prison and jails who may benefit from pre-release planning in an effort to prevent homelessness and recidivism.*